Wednesday

Monks House
Rodmell.

The MS has just come. So sorry I forgot.

I shall be in London on Friday till 4 — no chance of seeing you. I suppose — If so, write to 52 Tavistock Sq.

Very hurried, & I can't write. And rather melancholy. This I'll explain when we meet. If you are kind.

V Virginia

Do let me know any news from the F.O. Is your cold gone!

Sunday Monks House

Look here, I want to be told,

(1) how you are, truthfully.

(2) any news from Foreign Office?

News Ben? Anybody else got it?

My God, I do think you deserve death-duties for coming to London in that flood after a temperature of 104!

But tell me truly how you are.

Then (This is all between, within an inch of your life, Dadie & Charleston, I still rather melancholy, cross, & unable to

felt anything finished) then, about Thursday.
Can you come? Let me know as soon as
you can. Leonard thinks I want me to
go up to London with him, but if you
can come, I'd much rather - you much
rather - than go. Only, again, there'll
be no cook; no food, except of
Bartholomew's cooking. If you're
feeling ill, don't take risks.

But soon I'd like to see you.
Then I'd tell you about my melancholy & a thousand other things.
It's the last chance of a night before
London's chastity begins.

Let me hear on all these points,
especially your health & coming here,
at once.

Yr Virginia

NYPL

HAMILL & BARKER 2/13/62

Monk House
Rodmell. Friday Sept 2nd

Dearest Mrs N.

Well its all settled. Lady G. Wellesley has bought me for life. I have the use of the Rolls Royce & wine to taste. She paid £25 thousand down & the rest on mortgage, so I'm her's

Speaking sober now, however, I went belong to the two of you, on to the one of you, if the two of us belong to the one. In short, if Dotty's yours, I'm not. A profound truth is involved which I leave you to discover. This too hot to argue; & I'm too depressed.

It aint so much that I'm a bad writer though that I am, as that I'm a sold bond. The body to Lady G.W. the soul to Mrs Van Doren. Here am I bound hand & foot to write an article on the works of a man called Hemingway. There are 3 more to follow. For this I shall be paid £120.

Not a penny more do I earn as long as I live; so help me God. Rather would I go without shoes, stockings, & knickers, love; be ashamed of me if you like; tell me to my face you can't be seen in the street with me; may my stairs rot, my pictures fall to the ground, & rats devour my carpet & Mr Hemingway may be written & earn me £120 pounds. So good night

Virginia Woolf

Dont ask me what my article on Hemingway will be like. I shall make it what will sell best. I'm not proud.

Monk House
Rodmell. Friday Sept 2nd.

Dearest Mrs. N.

Well it all settled. Lady G. Wellesley has bought me for life. I have the use of the Rolls Royce & wine to taste. She paid £25 thousand down & the rest on mortgage, so I'm her's

Speaking sober now, however, I went belong to the two of yr, on to the one of you, if the two of us belong to the one. In short, if Dotty's yours, I'm not. A profound truth is involved which I leave you to discover. This too hot to argue: & I'm too depressed.

It aint so much that I'm a bad writer though that I am, as that I'm a dead bore. The body to Lady G.W: the soul to Mrs Van Doren. Here am I bound hand & foot to write an article on the works of a man called Hemingway. There are 3 more to follow. For this I shall make £120. Not a penny more do I earn as long as I live; so help me God. Rather would I go without shoes, stockings, face powder, love; be ashamed of you like; talk me to my face yr Aunt be seen in the street with me; may my stain rot, my pictures fade to the ground, & rats devour my carpet & Mrs Hemingway may be written & earn me £120 pounds. So good night

Virginia Woolf.

lover; may the thistle sow itself in my drawing room, & the barley grow where my pillow used to be—
work for the Americans again, write for money again; I will not.

I'm in a temper. thus I longed to write the first page of the Mothers this morning! And after this I'm tied to Romance & Psychology — as if I knew anything about that: now I do know one or two facts about mothers: & they must keep.

Then I'm quite alone. Leonard went up after all; but I don't suppose you could have come. And next Thursday — well you come then? I'll promise to be sweet as honey, soft as silk. Let me know.

If anything comes of the Wellesley-Monro marriage, the fruit belongs to me, not to you. After all, the idea was mine: you only did the menial work. Congreve, it was a triumph, if not for the art of poetry, at least for the life of Dotty. Monro with Leave Chewing the relics of his dinner; he with Jack in love with her; & so the ill-matched Launched on a Career of Gallantries, renunciations, explanations, forgivenesses: the only cheerful Event was walking with Pinker through a field of Clouded yellows this afternoon. The Clouded Yellow has played more part in my life than almost any other body or thing. Then Pinker swam in a dew pond.

And now, dearest, I must wash, & catch the 3 penny bus into Lewes, & meet Leonard, & drive out to dine with the Keynes. Lydia will sing "My Ear rings, my ear rings: " old Mr Sheppard of Kings will act the part of a Regency Buck; we shall sit out under

I've just written, or re-written, a
nice little story about Sapphism, for
the Americans.

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52 T.S.

Yes. do come as early as ever you
can on Monday. I'm now told
that I engaged myself to go with
Nena, Dunlop, & Clive to Hamptin
Court on Tuesday. If so, you'll
have to come. We'll dine; either
we'll haunt the terrace. For
my part, I should prefer solitude.
For yours, you'd prefer oysters.
Bad Vita, had wicked Vita.
What become of your fine
lecture about promiscuity?
Vadie looked divine last night
in a new plum coloured suit.
I'm outraged by your mother's

habili- ~~the bloody flags at Acton &~~
~~too much~~.

Still I've had 3 hours today of
Susie Buchan, thanks to you. She
says she knows you. I said
why chaperone your daughter?
she just go to bed with young men
as soon as look at them. Not a
successful remark. She says — oh
the days thousands of thys.

What a good record Harold
had in the Lot Sup: what a
bad one your agther had.
But have you committed incest with
Eddie? I can well believe it.
I can believe anything - the creeping
newts, the toads that spawn in
the ditch. What would Susie say,
or John either. for the matter of that?
a thousand million thank for
the pink coat. I've no
stamps, so be content.

VW.

wait another
line:
You will
Come on
Wednesday
under? ²
You will
write,
now, this
instant,
his
~~Lord~~
humble
little V
Duty-
Devotion
Eve.

52 Tavistock Sqre. ₤ 9th Oct..

The
Sackvilles.
Write me;
You know a
lot: You have
a rich husky
attic of a mind.

O yes, I want very much
to see you. Yr V.W. (Whatsitsean
Campbell)

Look, dearest what a lovely large thin it is, & thick how, were it not for the screen & the Campbell, it might all be filled to the brim with love-making unbelievable: indiscretions incredible: instead of which, nothing shall be said but what a Campbell behind the screen might hear. Really, its worse than being bound in morocco by Lytton, & read by all the tarts of the moment. What reminds me, do you know a man of that persuasion called Cecil Beaton - who wants to photograph me, & Osbert will consent upon the portrait in a catalogue; & shall I go & be done? I say no: I say I am living perpetually in fuses. I say, judging from your style & manner (this is what I say to Cecil Beaton) you are a Mere Catamite. Clive who came in yesterday, dropping with sleep after what I understood was an orgy, confirmed this. Why was he dropping with sleep? Oh, he said, after they'd all gone, he got into bed, but couldn't shut his eyes. Being in a close costive contrary mood I did not egg him on. So he went to Paris, & will be back next week, & then I'm to dine with him. Aint it romantic - this visionary & aethereal presence bowling Diaphanously over Gordon Square, like a silver spangled cloud? What are we to call her? Clive bursts into Nena who, solidly carving mutton for the children & rambles about, romanticising about Life, London, Autumn fires bring her, a man of 46 at his prime. Only in August I was thinking he would string himself from a Campsfort. But Vita, my dear: please do not drop a word to anyone about Clive's money & Nena: that would be fatal, & no doubt he has honourable intentions & will make a rich woman of her next Quarter day. She seems perfectly serene.

Here occurs a terrific gulf. Millions of things I want to say can't be said. You know why. You know for what a price - walking

wait another
line:
You will
Come on
Wednesday
to dinner?
You will
write,
now, this
instant,
his
~~hand~~
handle
letter of
duty.
Devotion
Due.
I am
reading
Knole.
The
Sackvilles.
Write me;
You know
best: You have
a sick busy
attic of a mind.
O yes, I want very much
to see you. Ever yours
Vita. (Sackville-West)

52 Tavistock Sqre. 9th Oct..

Look, dearest what a lovely large sheet this is, & think how, were it not for the screen & the Campbell, it might all be filled to the brim with love-making unbelievable indiscretions incredible: instead of which, nothing shall be said but what a Campbell behind the screen might hear. Really, it's worse than being bound in morocco by Lytton, & read by all the tarts of the moment. What legend me, do you know a man of that persuasion called Cecil Beaton - who wants to photograph me, & Osbert will consent upon the portrait in a catalogue; & shall I go & be done? I say no: I say I am living perpetually in Sussex. I say, judging from ~~Your~~ style & manner (this is what I say to Cecil Beaton) you are a Mere Catamite. Clive who came in yesterday, dropping with sleep after what I understood was an orgy, confirmed this. Why was he dropping with sleep? Oh, he said, after they'd all gone, he got into bed, but couldn't shut his eyes. Being in a close costive contrary mood I did not egg him on. So he went to Paris, & will be back next week, & then I'm to dine with him. Ain't it romantic - this visionary & aethereal person a brooding Diaphanous over Gordon Square, like a silver spangled cloud? What are we to call her? Clive boosts into Nena who, solidly carving mutton for the children & rambles about, romanticising about Life, London, Autumn fires being but a man of 46 at his prime. Only in August I was thinking he would string himself from a lamp-post. But Vita, my dear: please ~~do~~ not ~~drop~~ a word to anyone about Clive's money & Nena: that would be fatal, & no doubt be her honourable intentions & will make a rich woman of her next Quarter day. She seems perfectly serene.

Here occurs a terrific gulf. Millions of things I want to say can't be said. You know why. You know for what a price - walking

the canes with Campbell, you told my love letters. Very well. So we will skip all that & move on to Mrs Wells, & death, & the funeral at Golders Green, to which I'm going tomorrow, if I can scrape together a sufficiency of clothes. Wells wrote Leonard the oddest post card. I won't say that it was a picture post card, with a view of Easton Church, but practically that; a "just a line to say my wife died last night; or we had hoped to ask you & Mrs Woolf down for a week end."

I'm going to the funeral to see what's done with the bodies of unbelievers. What fun! How I love ceremonies, & add collocations (is that allowable?) of the human kind!

Yesterday morning I was in despair. You know that bloody book which Duckie & Leonard & I, drop by drop, from my breast? Fiction, or some title to that effect. I couldn't screw a word from me; & at last I rushed my head in my hands; dipped my pen in the ink, & wrote these words, as if automatically, on a clean sheet: Orlando: A Biography. No sooner had I done this than my body was flooded with rapture & my brain with ideas. I wrote rapidly till 12. Then I did an hour to Romans. So every morning I am going to write fiction (my own fiction) till 12; & Romans till 1. But listen; suppose Orlando turns out to be Vita; & it's all about you & the curls of your cheek & the lure of your mind (heart you have none, only brains) & how you go gallivanting down the lanes & up the stairs with (Campbell) — suppose there's the kind of shimmer of reality which sometimes attaches to my people, as the lustre on an oyster shell (& that recalls another Mary) suppose, I say, that Sibyl next October says "There's Virginia Woolf & Vita" & Ozzie Chaos with his great Chaps & Byard Sullivans, shall you mind? Say Yes, or No: Your Excellency as a subject arises largely from your noble birth. (But what's 400 years of nobility, all the same?) & the opportunity then given for florid descriptive passages in great abundance. Also, I admit, I should like to entwine & twist again some very odd, incongruous strands in you: seeing at length into the psychology of Campbell; & also, as I told you, it sprung upon me how I could revolutionise biography in a night: & do it & it agreeable to you I would like to toss this up in the air & see what happens. Yet, of course, I may not

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